

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MADRID 03786 141857Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
MCT-01 DHA-02 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 NSCE-00
SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /067 W
-----141902Z 004680 /73

O R 141651Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0304
INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION NATO
USMISSION BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 3786

LISBON: ALSO PASS VICE PRESIDENT'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINT, SP
SUBJECT: ANOTHER DAY OF VIOLENCE IN THE BASQUE PROVINCES
REPORTEDLY LEAVES TWO MORE DEAD

REF: MADRID 3772

1. SUMMARY: MANIFESTATIONS, CONFRONTATIONS BETWEEN DEMON-
STRATORS AND CIVIL GUARD ELEMENTS, AND WIDESPREAD WORK
STOPPAGES WERE THE ORDER OF THE DAY MAY 13 IN THE BASQUE
PROVINCES LEAVING TWO MORE DEAD AND THE DISTURBING PROSPECT
FOR FURTHER VIOLENCE. END SUMMARY.

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2. TYPICALLY, GUIPUZCOA (SAN SABASTIAN) WAS HARDEST HIT
BY BOTH STRIKE ACTIVITY AND POLICE-DEMONSTRATOR CONFRONTA-
TIONS AND THE PROVINCE SHUT DOWN FOR THE SECOND CONSECUTIVE
DAY. BUT TENSIONS ALSO INCREASED IN THE OTHER THREE BASQUE
PROVINCES AS WELL, WITH STRIKE ACTIVITY AND STREET
CLASHES MUCH MORE IN EVIDENCE THAN THEY HAD BEEN

MAY 12.

3. MORE VIOLENCE APPEARS ALMOST CERTAIN, WITH YESTERDAY'S ADDITIONAL TOLL ACTING AS A CATALYST AND TODAY'S FUNERAL MASS A POSSIBLE OCCASION. ALTHOUGH THEY MAY 15 PRO-AMNESTY RALLIES HAVE BEEN BANNED BY THE GOVERNMENT, AMCONSUL BILBAO SEES NO EVIDENCE THUS FAR THAT THE SPONSORS INTEND TO CALL THEM OFF.

4. MEANWHILE, "EL PAIS" HAS PUBLISHED EXCERPTS FROM THE SAN SEBASTIAN COMMUNIQUE OF ELEVEN BASQUE GROUPS, LED BY THE BASQUE NATIONALIST PARTY (PNV), ALLUDED TO IN REFTEL. THIS COMMUNIQUE REPORTEDLY STATES IN PART: "AT THIS TIME, THE KING...SHOULD UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION OF PROFOUND DETERIORATION--BOYCOTT OF THE ELECTIONS, RESIGNATIONS OF MAYORS, RENEWAL OF ARMED OFFENSIVES, LACK OF DEMOCRATIC CREDIBILITY OF THE ELECTIONS, ETC.--TO WHICH THE BASQUE PEOPLE COULD FIND ITSELF BROUGHT IF THE GOVERNMENT IN MADRID REFUSES TO FREE ALL (POLITICAL) PRISONERS AND ALLOW THE RETURN OF ALL BASQUE EXILES BY MAY 24."

5. THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, FOR ITS PART, ISSUED A STATEMENT AFTER ITS MAY 13 MEETING WHICH, INTER ALIA: --REAFFIRMED ITS INTENTION TO CARRY OUT THE REFORM PROGRAM WHILE POINTING OUT THAT THREATS TO PUBLIC ORDER WERE AN OBSTACLE TO THE PROCESS; --INDICATED IT HAD STUDIED A PROGRAM OF REFORMS OF THE PUBLIC ORDER APPARATUS, TO INCLUDE REMOVAL OF CIVIL GUARD ELEMENTS FROM BASQUE URBAN AREAS (LONG SOUGHT BY ALL

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BASQUE GROUPS); AND --CALLED FOR NATIONAL CONCILIATION, REFERRED TO PRISONER RELEASES ALREADY ACCOMPLISHED UNDER THE KING'S AMNESTY/ PARDON AND ADDED IT WAS "INFORMED" OF ADDITIONAL CASES WHICH MIGHT BE THE SUBJECT OF INDIVIDUAL PARDONS.

6. COMMENT: AS THE BASQUE PARTIES' COMMUNIQUE MAKES CLEAR, THE GOVERNMENT MAY FACE A REAL REGRESSION IN THE BASQUE SITUATION IF THE REMAINING BASQUE PRISONERS ARE NOT RELEASED BY MAY 24. BUT RELEASING THESE 30 OR SO PRISONERS, ALL OF WHOM APPARENTLY WERE INVOLVED IN BLOOD CRIMES, WOULD BE EVERY BIT AS CONTROVERSIAL (PARTICULARLY IN THE SPANISH MILITARY) AS THE LEGALIZATION OF THE COMMUNISTS, WHICH ITSELF DEVoured SO MUCH POLITICAL CAPITAL IN SUCH MATTERS AS TO ALMOST MAKE THE RELEASE OF THE REMAINING BASQUES IMPOSSIBLE FOR NOW. BASQUE REACTION TO THE GOVERNMENT'S FAILURE TO DO SO COULD INCLUDE RENEWED ETA VIOLENCE AND A CAMPAIGN FOR ABSTENTION IN THE COMING ELECTION WHICH COULD SUCK IN THE MODERATE AND CRITICALLY IMPORTANT PNV BASQUE

NATIONALIST PARTY WITHOUT WHOSE PARTICIPATION THE CONTEST AND
RESULTING CONSTITUENT PARLIAMENT WOULD HAVE LITTLE CREDIBILITY
AMONG MOST BASQUES. INTERESTINGLY, CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC LEADER
JOAQUIN RUIZ GIMENEZ HAS ATTEMPTED TO GET THE GOVERNMENT OFF THE
HOOK BY CALLING IN PAMPLONA FOR TOTAL AMNESTY TO BE THE
FIRST TASK OF THE NEWLY-ELECTED PARLIAMENT. STABLER

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